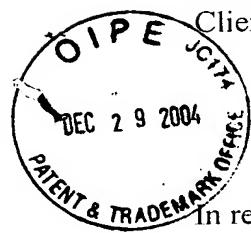


Attorney Docket: 081468-0304886
Client Reference: P-1643.000-US



IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re PATENT APPLICATION of: WIM T. TEL et al.

Application No.: 10/633,307

Group Art Unit: 2125

Filed: August 4, 2003

Examiner: R. Jarrett

Title: METHOD, COMPUTER PROGRAM PRODUCT AND APPARATUS FOR SCHEDULING MAINTENANCE ACTIONS IN A SUBSTRATE PROCESSING SYSTEM

COMMENTS ON STATEMENT OF REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

**Mail Stop Issue Fee
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450**

Sir:

Applicants confirm with appreciation the receipt of the Notice of Allowability in this Application.

Applicants note that the correct title is "METHOD, COMPUTER PROGRAM PRODUCT AND APPARATUS FOR SCHEDULING MAINTENANCE ACTIONS IN A SUBSTRATE PROCESSING SYSTEM" as amended by the Amendment filed on October 1, 2004, instead of the title shown on the Notice of Allowance and Fee(s) Due (PTOL-85) mailed on November 2, 2004.

In reply to the Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance dated November 2, 2004, Applicants respectfully note that patentability is based on the subject matter of the claims as a whole. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that no one element or limitation in particular should be deemed to impart to or be required for patentability of the claims. Further, Applicants respectfully submit that independent method claim 1, independent computer program product claim 9, independent apparatus claim 17 and independent method claim 25 are separately patentable from each other and solely for the subject matter specifically recited as a whole in each of those claims.

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Applicants note that claim 1 was amended to read, in part, "scheduling one or more maintenance actions to be performed in a part of the substrate processing system during a period associated with the gap" instead of "scheduling one or more maintenance actions to be performed in another part of the substrate processing system during a period associated with the gap" and that claim 1 as amended is patentable as a whole over the cited art of record.

Applicants also respectfully note that none of the allowed claims are limited on their face to the gap being "a spacing between two substrates, in a part of the substrate processing system, that exceeds a defined or accepted spacing between the substrates during processing in a referenced part of the substrate processing system." Further, none of the allowed claims are limited on their face to a "spacing" that "may be measured, for example, in terms of time, distance and number of process positions in the substrate processing system." Applicants respectfully submit that these claims are allowable over the cited art of record without any such limitations.

Further, Applicants do not necessarily agree that Takano teaches the method of claim 21 in relation to an exposure device. Applicants respectfully submit that Takano fails to disclose, teach or suggest claim 21 as a whole.

Respectfully submitted,

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By _____

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Date: December 29, 2004

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